

Johnson County Paratransit Advisory Board

Minutes

December 2, 2008

4810 Melrose Ave, Iowa City

Present:

Members: Terrence Neuzil, Larry Meyers, Vicky Robrock, Valerie Scher, Brian Buelow, Marc Rahe, Nancy Ostrognai

Ex-Officio: Roger Goedken, Dion Williams, Ann Trotter

Others: Tom Brase, SEATS Director, Angie Conard, Barb Morck

Absent:

Members: Marian Karr, Mike O'Donnell

Ex-Officio:

Others: Shelby Francis, Bionic Bus

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1. Meeting was called to order at 9:26 a.m.
 2. Chairperson's Report:

Mark: Welcome Nancy Ostrognai, rider representative. Rod Sullivan will be replacing Terrence Neuzil.

Recognize Terrence Neuzil, Tom will be giving Terrence a certificate. Terrence has served more than two terms (3-4 years).

Terrence: We are trying to incorporate a liaison system for our departments where two members of the board have oversight over each department within county government. Now that that system is in place we would like to have one of those liaisons sitting on the paratransit advisory board with Tom. Larry and Rod are liaisons so the plan is to have one of those two do this.

3. Director's Report:

- a. Number of missed rides for FY08

Tom: Last report shows two different amounts. One reports shows "verified". Cancels and no shows don't get verified in our system because there is no mileage. The numbers that we provide were cancels of 9,299 and with unverified it is 19,770. This is what we normally have. No shows were 4,558 which is a very high number, this doubled from last year. We are trying to work on no shows and how we can address that. If we go back for no shows it hurts our efficiency. Some are excused no shows, this is a medical reason. Early cancellations had 10,000 (which we consider acceptable).

Nancy: Would it be more efficient for SEATS to call doctors office before going to see if they are ready?

Tom: Good idea, a lot of the times we get lost in the shuffle (at the University) when we do call. They can't find the people. One of the issues is that we have 4-5 stops at the hospital. We would like to limit the number of locations we pick up so it is not dangerous for the drivers to back and pull up. Some of the locations we are going to are very difficult to get in and out of. We would like to get rid of a couple. Survey said there is interest in that.

Vicky: You said missed rides pretty much doubled, is that from FY07 to FY08. Do you have any idea how you are doing in FY09 compared to FY08?

Tom: Yes, over 3,000 so far. Already higher for the year.

Roger: Last time we talked about contacting individuals. Contacts were sent to Tom. Will this be useful?

Tom: It is very helpful for us to have agency contacts.

Roger: It has to be updated often.

Tom: Any other ideas for missed rides?

Roger: It doubled, is it the same individuals that are responsible?

Tom: Since Brian left we have not been tracking as close as we would like to. It is usually a certain group of people but it could vary. We need to watch it more and notify if there are issues.

Dion: Efficiency – ways agencies can help with. Some things are helping put coats on and after sitting and waiting for a half hour they don't want to have coats on the entire time. We talked about having a dispatch radio to call ahead saying they are five minutes out. If we could get the information that would increase efficiency.

Tom: Good idea but concerns. We are looking into different ideas. We don't have that many delays at group home and agencies. It is individuals that we have 2-4 pickups at the same location. We get to these locations and they are not ready (don't have shoes on).

Dion: There are times when the drivers get there a little early and the clients are still eating lunch so they need to finish eating, get down the hall, and get coats on. Hope this doesn't delay you too much.

Roger: What about using cell phones? Can the drivers call the locations?

Tom: We have a policy that says they can't use a cell phone while driving. Even at stop lights they can't use them.

Roger: Discuss the consequences of missed rides.

Brian: Correct me if I'm wrong but the consequences of too many missed rides is getting kicked off.

Tom: Yes but there is an appeals process when it is an ADA rider so it takes longer (30 days to appeal). It is difficult to have a quick reaction.

Dion: Is there a report that can be sent to show missed rides?

Tom: Yes, I will e-mail it to Goodwill and Systems.

Vicky: Something we touched on during the last meeting was how do you make those people accountable because they have nothing to lose.

4. Survey Results

Tom: Overall pleased. Will work on a few things. Thank you to everyone on the committee. Put together very well.

A reservationist is going to customer service training tomorrow.

Vicky: Length of time to make reservation 5-9 min seems excessive, why, are there software problems?

Tom: No, this is when we have multiple rides or changing rides.

Mark: Comments on the length of time did not stand out. Some were people that are just not happy (isolated occurrence).

Tom: Routematch is not the best for finding windows. State recommended this software; the windows part is not as easy. Recommended times don't always pick the best times and sometimes they will say there is not a window when a bus is open. Routematch is supposed to be looking into this.

Vicky: In your opinion was StrataGen a better system for you?

Tom: The scheduling engine was better for us. Billing and invoicing is better with Routematch.

Roger: If someone is on the 8th floor does the driver go up and get them?

Tom: No, they should have an intercom system or the dispatcher will call and tell them we are there.

Roger: Heard a lot of comments on the five minute wait from people.

5. Old Business

- a. Approval of minutes from last meeting. Approved by Terrance, second by Vicky

Tom: Are there any objections to posting the survey results on the web? - None

6. New Business

Roger: Down the road can you have voice mail or something better for those who have difficulty calling during business hours?

Nancy: When you call the number the machine should tell you what to do. Easily confused.

Tom: We have changed the message since we moved, shortened the message. Brian was working with the IS department to set up e-mail to schedule rides. We will continue to look into this.

Tom: As part of the open discussion I did invite a person that wrote an opinion letter to the paper to this meeting. I responded to things that were listed on the opinion page.

Larry: Flip side – Today has a positive letter about SEASTS.

Terrence: What were his concerns?

Tom: Talked about the software. SEATS has had software before anyone else in the state. Our software is not as efficient as we would like. Waiting for the upgrade. He also discussed public input that is why he was invited. Scheduling availability was another issue. These hours are fairly common with paratransit operations.

Terrence: All departments are aware of the economy. These are things we look at when we need to cut costs.

Tom: We are exploring other options (e-mail). You would have to wait for a confirmation if you do this.

Nancy: What number do you call for after hours? Can you leave a message telling people what number to call?

Tom: The number is in the Rider's Guide and we are trying to advertise it more.

Grand Opening – December 9, 4-6 p.m. Will confirm

Next meeting will be Feb. 17, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Adjourn at 10:22 a.m.